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SUBJECT: President Paasikivi's Views on His Negotiations in Moscow

There is enclosed the text of a speech delivered by President Paasikivi of Finland on the evening of September 22, explaining and defending the accord which he reached in the negotiations at Moscow from which he had just returned.

The President revealed nothing new but it is believed that his speech is of interest because of the personal observations made there in. He commenced by stating that the recent trip had been the seventh to which he had gone to Moscow on negotiations but was the only one from which he had returned feeling satisfied. His reasons for satisfaction were two; first, that he had found the political sentiments toward Finland favorable and sympathetic and, second, that the Soviet leaders considered relations with Finland in a realistic manner. By remarking that these relations were observed and criticized in a manner pertinent to Finland's political and economic life, he probably implied a contrast between present Soviet attitudes and the more nakedly aggressive designs of the past when he must have felt that his country was regarded as a mere pawn in power politics.

In speaking of the extension of the Fenno-Soviet Agreement of Friendship, Collaboration and Mutual Aid, the President appeared to be on the defensive, undoubtedly so because of recent published and spoken criticism of the length of extension and of the fact that the agreement was prolonged without amendment. He made it clear that in his own opinion the controversial articles 1. and 2. providing for defense of the country and Soviet assistance in the case of attack from the West and the responsibility for consultation in case of a military threat against Finnish territory, were necessary and integral elements in fulfillment of the spirit of the agreement. At one point the President swung to the offensive in referring to newspaper articles which had suggested dangers threatening Finland from the Soviet Union which suggestions had proved to be wrong.

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Page 2 of 2
Desp. No. 180
From Helsinki

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Page _____ of _____
Encl. No. _____
Desp. No. _____
From _____

He concluded by stating that he hoped and believed that the two protocols would further strengthen the relations with the Soviet Union which had improved year after year during the existence of the Friendship Agreement.

For the Charge d'Affaires a.i.:

Edward P. Prince

Edward P. Prince
Second Secretary of Embassy

enc;

1. President Paasikivi's Speech, September 22, 1955

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TRANSLATION

PRESIDENT PAASIKIVI'S RADIO TALK

September 22, 1955

7:30 p.m.

Citizens, I have returned from my seventh journey to Moscow for negotiations. Until now I have returned from there dissatisfied. This is the first time I am satisfied.

I am satisfied with the concrete results reached. But I am also satisfied with the observations I was able to make in Moscow. On this journey I had opportunities of meeting the present Soviet leaders several times.

On the basis of numerous discussions with them we noticed, both my companions and I, that the political sentiment towards Finland is very favorable and the sympathies great. But in addition to this I confirmed the fact that Fenno-Soviet relations are observed and criticized in an apposite manner. This was the second reason for my satisfaction.

Pleasant news has swept over Finland in recent days. The Soviet Union has given up its lease and other rights to Porkkala, which will be returned to Finland. As the published communique says, this is due to good Fenno-Soviet relations, as well as to the international political situation, the "atmosphere of Geneva".

It was necessary to keep the preparations for ceding the Porkkala area absolutely confidential. I took personal responsibility for it, for we could not afford to endanger, even to the slightest degree, the favorable solution of a problem which was of vital importance to the country.

The ceding of Porkkala is very important to us. Of the stipulations of the 1944 Armistice Agreement, the passage regarding Porkkala was one of the most onerous. The rights guaranteed to the Soviet Union, not only to the Porkkala base but also to free passage through use of all routes and facilities between this base and the Soviet Union, colored Finland's neutrality and Finland's entire international position.

Marshal Mannerheim deeply regretted the Porkkala base. When he was President, he discussed the matter several times with me, the then Prime Minister. Mannerheim stated that because of the Porkkala base, the capital ought to be moved from Helsinki to Turku. I replied that I was of the same opinion as to the burden of the Porkkala base, but it was not possible to realize the idea of changing the capital.

Now, due to the favorable attitude the Soviet Union has taken

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towards us, this problem, which is so burdensome to us, has received a happy solution. A pencil has mended what the sword had broken. This is one more proof of the fact that friendly negotiations and reasonable adjustments are the path along which we, when arranging matters with the Soviet Union, shall have to proceed.

In connection with the ceding of Porkkala, the Agreement of Friendship of April 6, 1948 has been extended 20 years. The opening speech delivered by Chairman of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet Marshal Voroshilov made it clear that on the part of the Soviet Union this was the presupposition for the solution of the Porkkala question.

It is stated in the Friendship Agreement that Finnish foreign policy endeavors to keep out of the disagreements between great nations. Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the agreement deal with the attitude of Finland in case of war and these have caused suspicion. In my radio talk in 1948, I explained these things. If our country or the Soviet Union through our territory, is attacked, we are liable to defend the integrity of our country as well as we can and if we need help, we will get it from the Soviet Union according to what is agreed. All this is quite clear and depends on the nature of the circumstances, and nobody ought to have anything against this. The second paragraph says that there is a responsibility to consult when a military threat against Finnish territory has been observed by both parties and this, too, depends on prevailing conditions and does not endanger our position.

I have gone through the minutes of the Diet when the 1948 agreement was discussed and I have considered the points that were then brought forward. I have come to the conclusion that the wording of the agreement does not need any revision. In addition, we must bear in mind that Finland has in the 1940 Peace Treaty and in all subsequent treaties promised not to make alliances or take part in any unions which are aimed against the Soviet Union. If it really happened that a foreign power should come through Finland and attack the Soviet Union and Finland should just sit with its hands crossed, it would mean the same as to support the attacker and favor it, which would be against the spirit of the Friendship Agreement. In fact the contents of the paragraphs 1 and 2 of the agreement is closely connected with the fulfillment of the principles of the agreement.

The Friendship Agreement has been valid since April 1948, almost 8 years. During this time the "cold war" has raged for many years. In spite of this there have been no disadvantages or difficulties for us from this agreement--excepting some articles appearing in the newspapers where there have been suggestions about dangers which

UNCLASSIFIED

Page _____ of _____
Desp. No. _____
From _____

UNCLASSIFIED
(Classification)

Page 3 of 3
Encl. No. 1
Desp. No. 180
From Helsinki

threaten us from the Soviet Union and which have all proved to be wrong. Our relations with the Soviet Union, which are the gravest problem of our foreign policy, have improved year after year during the time the Friendship Agreement has been in existence. I hope and believe that the signed agreements, which will be presented to the Diet for discussion and approval, will further strengthen this happy development.

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